AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method carried out by a service provider of providing enhanced performance in an interactive television system, comprising:

scanning an interactive content bearing program for a universal resource locator (URL);

upon finding a URL in the interactive content bearing program, mirroring content associated with the URL to a cache memory residing at a service provider facility;

presenting the interactive content bearing program to a plurality of subscribers;

receiving a request from a subscriber for the URL;

retrieving the mirrored content associated with the URL from the cache memory upon receipt of the request; and

delivering the mirrored content associated with the URL from the service provider facility to the subscriber requesting the URL.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising purging the cache memory in accordance with a purging algorithm.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the purging algorithm purges the cache in accordance with an amount of time the mirrored content has been in the cache.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the purging algorithm purges the cache in accordance with a least frequent use algorithm.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the purging algorithm purges the cache in accordance with an order that the mirrored content was placed in the cache.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the cache memory is situated at a service provider head end.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~cache memory is situated at a subscriber's set-top box~~ delivering is carried out by transmitting the mirrored content to the subscriber requesting the URL via an out-of-band channel for receipt by the subscriber using a cable modem.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising determining that the URL requested by the subscriber is not in the cache memory, and downloading the interactive content associated with the URL from the Internet.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

examining the content associated with the URL for a secondary URL; and

mirroring content associated with the secondary URL to the cache memory.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus residing at a service provider site for providing enhanced performance in an interactive subscriber television system, comprising:

a cache memory residing at the service provider site;

program means running on a programmed processor residing at the service provider site for:

scanning an interactive content bearing program for a universal resource locator (URL);

upon finding a URL in the interactive content bearing program, mirroring content associated with the URL to the cache memory;

a media server residing at the service provider site for presenting the interactive content bearing program to a plurality of subscribers;

means for receiving a request from a subscriber for the URL;

means for retrieving the mirrored content associated with the URL from the cache memory; and

means for delivering the mirrored content associated with the URL to the subscriber requesting the URL.

11. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the program means further comprises means for purging the cache memory in accordance with a purging algorithm.

12. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the purging algorithm purges the cache in accordance with an amount of time the mirrored content has been in the cache.

13. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the purging algorithm purges the cache in accordance with an order that the mirrored content was placed in the cache.

14. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the cache memory is situated at a service provider head end.

15. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the cache memory is situated at a subscriber's set-top box.

16. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

means for examining the content associated with the URL for a secondary URL; and

means for mirroring content associated with the secondary URL to the cache memory.

17. (Currently Amended) A method carried out at a service provider of providing enhanced performance in an interactive television system, comprising:

scanning an interactive content bearing program for a universal resource locator (URL);

upon finding a URL in the interactive content bearing program, mirroring content associated with the URL to a cache memory situated at a service provider headend;

presenting the interactive content bearing program to a plurality of subscribers;

receiving a request from a subscriber for the URL;

retrieving the mirrored content associated with the URL from the cache memory upon receipt of the request; [and]

delivering the mirrored content associated with the URL from the service provider facility to the subscriber requesting the URL; and

purging the cache memory in accordance with a purging algorithm, wherein the purging algorithm purges the cache in accordance with an amount of time the mirrored content has been in the cache memory.

18. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 17, wherein the mirroring further comprises mirroring the content associated with the URL to a local cache memory situated at a subscriber's set-top box, and wherein the retrieving comprises retrieving the content associated with the URL to one of the service provider headend cache memory and the local cache memory.

19. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 18 [17], further comprising determining that the URL requested by the subscriber is not in the service provider headend cache memory and the local cache memory, and downloading the interactive content associated with the URL from the Internet.

20. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 17, further comprising:

examining the content associated with the URL for a secondary URL; and

mirroring content associated with the secondary URL to the service provider headend cache memory.

21. (Original) A method of providing enhanced performance in an interactive television system, comprising:

scanning an interactive content bearing program for a universal resource locator (URL);

upon finding a URL in the interactive content bearing program, mirroring content associated with the URL to a cache memory situated at a service provider head end and a local cache memory situated at a subscriber's set-top box;

presenting the interactive content bearing program to a plurality of subscribers;

receiving a request from a subscriber for the URL;

retrieving the mirrored content associated with the URL from one of the cache memory and the local cache memory;

delivering the mirrored content associated with the URL to the subscriber;

purging the cache memory in accordance with a purging algorithm, wherein the purging algorithm purges the cache in accordance with an amount of time the mirrored content has been in the cache.

22. (Original) The method according to claim 21, further comprising determining that the URL requested by the subscriber is not in the cache memory and the local cache memory, and downloading the interactive content associated with the URL from the Internet.

23. (Original) The method according to claim 21, further comprising:

examining the content associated with the URL for a secondary URL; and

mirroring content associated with the secibdary URL to the cache memory.

24. (Currently Amended) A storage medium storing instructions which, when executed on a programmed processor residing at a service provider, carry out a method of providing enhanced performance in an interactive television system, comprising:

scanning an interactive content bearing program for a universal resource locator (URL);

upon finding a URL in the interactive content bearing program, mirroring content associated with the URL to a cache memory residing at a service provider facility;

presenting the interactive content bearing program to a plurality of subscribers;

receiving a request from a subscriber for the URL;

retrieving the mirrored content associated with the URL from the cache memory upon receipt of the request; and

delivering the mirrored content associated with the URL from the service provider facility to the subscriber requesting the URL.

25. (Original) The storage medium according to claim 24, further comprising purging the cache memory in accordance with a purging algorithm.

26. (Original) The storage medium according to claim 24, further comprising determining that the URL requested by the subscriber is not in the cache memory, and downloading the interactive content associated with the URL from the Internet.

27. (Original) The storage medium according to claim 24, further comprising:

examining the content associated with the URL for a secondary URL; and

mirroring content associated with the secondary URL to the cache memory.